

Message Text

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63

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 /079 W

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P R 222040Z APR 75

FM AMCONSUL CURACAO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2243

INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMCONSUL PARAMARIBO

COMCARIBSEAFRON ROOSEVELZ RDS PR

AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS PINT, NA

SUBJECT: APRIL 25 ISLAND COUNCIL ELECTIONS IN THE NA

REF: CURACAO'S A-19

1. AS THE APRIL 25 ISLAND COUNCIL ELECTIONS DRAW NEAR, CERTAIN TRENDS HAVE DEVELOPED WHICH MAY PORTEND MAJOR READJUSTMENTS WITHIN THE GNA COALITION. ON ARUBA, THE MEP PARTY APPEARS TO BE GATHERING MOMENTUM WHICH MAY BRING IT A MAJORITY IN ARUBA'S AWQSSE T ISLAND COUNCIL AND ON CURACAO FRENTE OBRERO'S IMPACT MAY BE INCREASED BY A BLANKET ENDORSEMENT BY THE LABOR UNIONS COUPLED WITH A LOW VOTER TURNOUT.

2. MEP'S EFFECTIVE NETWORK OF NEIGHBORHOOD CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS AND MASS RALLIES HAVE STOKED POPULAR FEELING ON THE CAMPAIGN ISSUE OF QTE STATUS APARTE UNQTE. IN CONTRAST, PPA'S CAMPAIGN HAS BEEN LACKLUSTER AND MANY UNCOMMITTED VOTERS NOW APPEAR TO HAVE JOINED THE MEP

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CAMP. WHILE IT REMAINS POSSIBLE THAT THE PPA-AVP COALITION

CAN EMERGE WITH CONTROL OF THE ISLAND COUNCIL, POLITICAL OB-SERVERS HAVE CONCEDED THAT MEP IS MORE LIKELY TO CONSOLIDATE ITS POSITION IN THE GNA WITH A SOLID VICTORY IN THE ISLAND COUNCIL ELECTIONS, PERHAPS WINNING AS MANY AS 14 SEATS.

3. ON APRIL 21, THE CURACAO WORKER'S FEDERATION (CFW) ANNOUNCED ITS ENDORSEMENT OF LIL ON QTE PAPA UNQTE GODETT'S FRENTE OBRERO AND URGED ITS MEMBERS TO SUPPORT IT IN THIS ELECTION. THE DECISION BY CFW LEADERS, TOGETHER WITH TACIT CONCURRENCE FROM THE AVVC LABOR CONFERERATION, MAY WELL MEAN A GROUND-SWELL OF SUPPORT FOR FRENTE NRBM ORGANIZED LABOR ON CURACAO. MUCH OF FRENZE'S SUPPORT HAS TRADITIONALLY COME FROM THE UNION RANK AND FILE. BUT CFW'S ENDORSEMENT COULD NEARLY GUARANTEE FRENTE OBRERO 20,011 TO 24,000 VOTES OF ALMOST 85,000 ELIGIBLE VOTERS ON THE ISLAND.

4. THE CURACAO ELECTORATE'S REACTION TO RECENT EVENTS SUCH AS THE TEACHER'S STRIKE, BLAFD CAMPAIGNS, AND GENERAL DIS-ILLUSIONMENT WITH THE ISLAND'S ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL SITUATIONS U RRS OF A LOW TURNOUT AT THE POLLS OF APRIL 25. AN 80 PERCENT TURNOUT WOULD MEAN, IN THE CONTEXT OF ELECTION MATHEMATICS, THAT A SEAT ON THE ISLAND COUNCIL REPRESENTS 3,010 TO 3,500 VOTES. SINCE FRENTE HISTORICALLY HAS MANAGED TO GET MOST OF ITS SUPPORTERS TO THE POLLS REGARDLESS OF THE OVERALL TURNOUT, A SMALLER TURNOUT WILL ENHANCE FRENTE'S POSITION; NON-VOTING BY THOSE NORMALLY SUPPORTING OTHER PARTIES COULD MATERIALLY INCREASE FRENTE'S PROPORTION. COUNTING ON THE ENDORSEMENT FROM CURACAO'S LABOR UNIONS AND ESTIMATING LOW VOTER PARTICIPATION, FRENTE LEADERS ARE NOW BEING EXTREMELY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE POSSIBLE RESULT; THE 6 SEATS WHICH FRENTE HAD HOPED FOR LAST MONTH ARE NOW GENERALLY CONCEDED TO THEM AND GREATER GAINS ARE POSSIBLE.

5. RUMORS ARE PERSISTENT THAT CUBAN MONEY IS POURING INTO THE ISLAND TO FUND FRENTE OBRERO'S CAMPAIGN. IT IS APPARENT THAT FRENTE, THE TRADITIONAL QTE POOR PEOPLES PARTY UNQTE, IS SPENDING HEAVILY. IT HAS ALSO BEEN REPORTED THAT CASTRO'S RADIO HAVANA HAS BROADCAST POLITICAL PROPAGANDA IN SPANISH SUPPORTING THE FRENTE OBRERO PARTY ON A REGULAR BASIS EACH MORNING FROM 6:00 AM TO 7:00 AM EACH DAY.

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